

Fall 2015

The Organ Historical Society – New Orleans Chapter

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www.ohsno.org

Bennett Britt, President; Dr Carolyn Clawson, Secretary; Benjie & Bob Branson, Co-Treasurers
Travers Koerner, Editor of *The Swellshoe*, John DeMajo, Web Master

Annual Dues Due

Our little organization operates on an academic year calendar, and we ask for dues in the first newsletter of the Fall season. Enclosed you will find a form and a stamped envelope for you to return annual dues of \$25.00. We are grateful for your support.

President's Report – Bennett Britt

According to the calendar, autumn has begun. In New Orleans we are made aware of this reality by the start of the school year and the resumption of various musical and other organizations' usual activities rather than by a change in the weather.

Our New Orleans Chapter of the OHS is excited about prospects for the coming year. Plans are underway for a members' recital on the Austin Organ at First Presbyterian, where Rachelen Lien played for many years. Peter Sykes has been engaged to give an organ/harpsichord recital at Grace Lutheran in the spring.

Last year's major project has not been completed entirely yet. Late last Spring, many of our members volunteered to assist Roy Redman in cleaning and making playable once again the circa 1875 George Jardine organ in St. Joseph RC Church. It is one of the historic gems of this city. What a joy it was to hear it again! As most of you are aware, my wife, Carol, who was scheduled to play a recital on that instrument in August became ill the evening before the recital and required hospitalization. It was the first time that she has ever cancelled a recital for any reason. The members of the parish who had been so supportive of the project elected to proceed with the event anyway. Thanks to our own intrepid Robert Zanca who rescued

the day by stepping up at the last moment to perform the recital, those in attendance were able to experience some of the wonder of this organ and enjoy a lavish reception following.

I am looking forward to a splendid year of music, and I encourage each of you to join in the activities of our chapter and to promote in your churches all of the public events we sponsor.

Bennett

Members Recital First Presbyterian Church

On Sunday, November 29th at 3:00 PM, members of our OHS Chapter will perform on a seldom-heard 1916 Austin organ in the First Presbyterian Church, 5401 South Claiborne Avenue. This magnificent English perpendicular neo-Gothic inspired church is noted for its architectural beauty.

First Presbyterian Church has had a presence in New Orleans for almost 300 years. The structure you will see at the concert is their fourth building in the city.

In recent years, the organ has fallen into disrepair and has become unplayable. At the request of a new enthusiastic pastor, Roy Redman has performed a miracle and made several repairs. We are now going to hear it again. We want to mention that May Ball has been the organist there for many years.

The sanctuary suffered much damage during Katrina with flood water above the pew levels. The organ, high-up in chambers was untouched. The church has made a remarkable recovery and is now completely renovated and back to normal.

Make plans to be there to either play or to show your support.

On a personal note, I would like to mention that I was organist and choir director there for 18 years. It was a memorable period in my life!

Rachelen

News from Napoleonville

The Friends of Christ Episcopal Church in Napoleonville held their annual Holy Communion and business meeting on Saturday, November 7,

LaDonna Alexander played the recently repaired Jardine organ during the service. The meeting of the Friends of Christ Church immediately followed the service.

The Friends recently agreed to hire Roy Redman to guide them in repairing this historic organ.

For more information about The Friends of Christ Church or to donate, please contact The Friends of Christ Church, Inc., P. O. Box 27, Napoleonville, LA 70390.

Editor's Note: We are grateful to LaDonna Alexander for her continued interest in the Napoleonville organ as well as for keeping us informed.

A letter to the Archbishop of New Orleans

ORGAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
New Orleans Chapter
1010 Nashville Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70115

July 6, 2015

Most Reverend Aymond:

I am writing to let you know about the recent repair of the pipe organ in the loft of historic St. Joseph Church on Tulane Avenue.

The local chapter of the Organ Historical Society initiated this repair with the wonderful support and encouragement of Father Tom Stehlik and church member Marcia Curole and others in the church.

We are happy that it is now being used for masses. This is not a full restoration, but it is indeed working now and serving the people in worship.

Enclosed is further explanation in a letter that we sent to OHS donors. We received small donations from members of OHS from all over the country.

We are grateful to Father Tom and St. Joseph members for their cooperation and donations.

Many thanks for all that the Archdiocese does for the people of South Louisiana.

Yours in worship,

Benjie Branson, Treasurer

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List of donors to the St Joseph organ project

Anticipating the recent work of the Jardine organ at St Joseph's Church on Tulane Avenue, a call went to OHS members for donations. As usual, the generosity of our members was outstanding. We particularly want to thank and to acknowledge them.

Mary Gifford
Joe Fitzer
Paul Anderson
Rachelen Lien
Dr Carolyn Clawson
Benjie and Bob Branson
Will Headlee
Patty Andrews
LaDonna Alexander
Anthony Centanni
William T Van Pelt
Dr William Long
James Hammann
Robert Pedesco
Frank Kuhlmann
Fred Lawson
Norman Maunz
William Ziegenfuss
Temple Sinai – Rabbi Edward Cohn

Rosalind Mohnsen
Capt Clarke Hawley
J O Love
Rev Travers Koerner
Glenn Gentry
James Oakes
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